

# The 1st AD in Operation Iraqi Freedom

Major Martha G. Granger, U.S. Army

**O**N 8 APRIL 2004, a week before completing its relief in place (RIP) with Task Force (TF) 1st Cavalry Division (1CD) and returning home after a year of combat in Baghdad, Iraq, TF 1st Armored Division (1AD) received orders to continue combat operations in Iraq for an additional 90 days.

Dispersed and having nearly completed its materiel drawdown, TF 1AD had already begun to redeploy forces to Fort Riley, Kansas; Fort Polk, Louisiana; and garrisons in Germany. TF 1AD had 1,667 soldiers in Kuwait, and 5,587 had redeployed to Germany and the United States. Of the 2,806 pieces of equipment in Kuwait, 1,285 were redeployed. Army pre-positioned stocks (APS), stay-behind equipment (SBE), selected authorized stockage list (ASL), other equipment, and all expendable supplies had been transferred to TF 1CD or theater stocks.

Within 3 weeks, TF 1AD was in a new area of operations (AO) with new equipment and stocks and was fighting a new enemy—as if it had never planned on leaving. This remarkable feat, accomplished by Iron Soldiers, leaders, and staff, would not have been possible without adaptive logistics.

The division was to stay in Iraq because of increased enemy activity. Initially, the 2d Brigade Combat Team deployed a task force to An Najaf on 4 April 2004 to reinforce Multi-National Division (Central South) (MND[CS]). The task force then repositioned to Al Kut on 7 April to restore control of the Coalition Provisional Authority Headquarters. On 8 April, the entire division received orders to remain in Iraq, reinforce MND(CS), relieve the Marine expeditionary force south of Baghdad, and become the Combined Joint Task Force 7 (CJTF-7) Operational Reserve. Task Force 1AD's new AO and associated lines of communication (LOC) spanned an area 50 times the size of Baghdad. Everyone and everything in Kuwait, with few exceptions, was ordered to return to Iraq.

To appreciate the magnitude of the logistics issues the division confronted one must understand how the division had prepared to redeploy. On 20 February, each unit began to enter the window (40 days before transfer of authority [TOA]) for canceling all parts requisitions and filling requirements with on-hand theater stocks only. The division used the 40-day window to counter long requisition and customer-wait times and to prevent excess from arriving in theater after TF 1AD departed. Even after stopping requisitions, canceling due-ins, and shifting routing identifier codes (RICs) to TF 1CD, 75 to 100 containers of parts, especially back-ordered items, arrived for TF 1AD after the TOA date. The support operations shop was able, in some cases, to retrieve these parts from TF 1CD because of the change of mission. Task Force 1CD processed others parts, however, distributed them to their supply support activity (SSA), or retrograded them.

After the TOA-40 date, the primary Class IX source for TF 1AD units became division support command's (DISCOM's) fleet and Class IX managers of the division materiel management center (DMMC), as well as the Class IX expediter cell in Arifjan, Kuwait, which walked through hundreds of high-priority requisitions from theater warehouses. Parts not transferred to TF 1CD quickly disappeared from ASLs and prescribed load lists already challenged with high zero-balance levels. Despite the limited Class IX flow, TF 1AD maintained its combat fleets at 90 percent operational readiness rates and most other fleets at 80 percent or better.

In preparing for reconstitution at home station, TF 1AD planned for its 300 unit-level logistics systems (ULLS)-S4 and ground and air Standard Army Maintenance Systems (SAMS) to redeploy with unit-advanced parties. To prepare for this move, DISCOM's Combat Service Support Automation Management Office (CSSAMO) teams reconfigured

all the boxes early with homestation Department of Defense Activity Address Codes (DODAACs), and a CSSAMO team redeployed to Germany to work with a contracted reset team. At the time of change of mission, over two-thirds of the boxes left Iraq, and the division's RICs (except for one brigade) had been transferred. All of this had to be reversed after the 8 April decision. Within 3 weeks, new RICs were acquired to replace the ones transferred to TF 1CD; Standard Army Retail Supply System (SARSS) servers were on-line by 17 April; SAMS was operational by 23 April; and 97 percent of ULLS were operational by 29 April. The only real change at the completion of reset was that TF 1AD gave up its SARSS 2AD capability and, instead, tied directly into the supporting 321st Corps Theater Automatic Data Processing Service Center (CTASC). Although this arrangement reduced the DMMC manager's review file options and other capabilities in SARSS, the tradeoff for ordering parts quickly was worth it.

By late March, TF 1AD had transferred a large portion of its property to TF 1CD; returned it to APS; turned it in as serviceable to corps or as unserviceable to the Defense Reutilization Management System; or containerized it for redeployment to home station. The division disposed of 22,104 pieces of SBE (or 21 percent of total SBE); 2,278 APS items (95 percent); 6,049 pieces of Table of Distribution and Allowances property (65 percent); and 11,497 pieces of Modified Table of Organization and Equipment property (57 percent), including such critical items as APS materiel-handling equipment; reverse osmosis water purification units; morale, welfare, and recreation items; and refrigerators, air conditioners, and fans.

During DISCOM's RIP, several Iraqi civilian contracts for services and transportation were either cancelled or transferred to TF 1CD's DISCOM. The division's SARSS servers and satellite terminals (very small aperture terminals [VSAT]) that had enabled 1AD to transmit data over the Nonsecure Internet Protocol Router Network were also midway through the transfer process. What the division could halt it did; what it could not, it scrounged for. The CSSAMO piggybacked multiple brigades off the limited VSATs to enable units to order. But within 2 weeks, the property book office acquired four new VSATs and in another month, the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR) acquired three additional VSATs from the Combined Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) to cover its extended battlespace in MND(CS).

Stocks from the main support battalion (MSB) logistics release point and the forward support battalion and regimental support squadrons (RSSs) that had been drawn down more than 2 months before

the scheduled TOA date included meals, ready to eat; unitized group ration (UGR) heat-and-serve modules; UGR-A rations; and bottled water. Stocks transferred or turned in divisionwide included packaged petroleum products, excess uniforms, and other organizational clothing and individual equipment (OCIE). Postal services were discontinued on 31 March, so many soldiers shipped home personal gear, extra uniforms and boots, and packed B and C bags (extra OCIE) in containers for early inspection and shipment via commercial service out of Kuwait.

By 8 April, almost all stockpiles were gone. This was probably the most difficult process to reverse. Over a month later, TF 1AD was still attempting to build 10 days of supply of rations and water at Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) and 5 days of supply at forward operating bases (FOBs). Frequently interdicted and congested routes; lack of stocks at the general support level to support two divisions simultaneously (TF 1CD and TF 1AD); and the rapid establishment of more than 10 new TF 1AD FOBs to support combat operations spanning nearly 25,000 square miles in southern Iraq compounded the problem.

Class V reconstitution was particularly difficult. Units had drawn down well below 80 percent on some ammunition basic loads, and several brigade combat teams (BCTs) had turned in all ammunition minus force-protection ammunition necessary to travel to Kuwait. Through persistence and unit coordination, the division ammunition office (DAO), got CJTF-7 to release all ammunition available in theater and return it to units within 3 weeks. Theater- and Armywide Department of Defense Identification Codes (DODIC) shortages plagued the division for almost a month after change of mission, however. Particularly short were 120-millimeter (mm) mortar rounds and 40-mm high-explosive, dual-purpose and 2.75-inch rockets. When these stocks became available, they often arrived just in time to fill critical shortages for units already fighting in the south. CH47s expedited movement, especially between Logistics Support Area (LSA) Anaconda and BIAP, and between BIAP and the 2ACR's RSS. Theater stocks were not prepared for the surge, however. Several DODIC items had to be flown directly from Kuwait to BIAP almost immediately after being unloaded from ships. By late April, about the same time the DAO had completed its final turn-in of training ammunition and closed the range complex it had used for gunnery, units began asking for that ammunition again.

Class IV procedures changed completely after the change of mission. The division Class IV yard, managed by division engineers all year, had been disbanded. Over 100 containers of Class IV items had

M1A1 Abrams crewmen of the 1st Armored Division prepare to load tanks on aircraft leaving Iraq, 1 April 2004.



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been shipped to Camp Cooke for TF 1CD's use. Most barrier material (HESCO and concrete barriers), turned in as FOBs closed. In the 2 months before redeployment, TF 1AD had drawn down from 28 FOBs to 8. Compounding the shortage was the fact that TF 1AD had to build FOBs in the new AO from scratch. The DISCOM general supply officer began the acquisition of Class IV based on specific BCT requests. Stocks came from Kuwait, LSA Anaconda (Balad), and Camp Cooke. Unit requirements went unfilled until early May, not because stocks were unavailable in theater, but because of distribution delays as a result of road congestion and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) along the two main supply routes running from Kuwait to Baghdad. Lack of available security stalled supply convoys at convoy support centers along the routes. Attaching one of the 1/94th Field Artillery Battalion to the DISCOM as dedicated convoy security helped get division and CJTF-7 convoys north.

DISCOM had managed the actual redeployment of personnel, combat equipment, and rolling stock from two locations: Camp Flexible at BIAP and Command Post (CP) Kuwait from Arifjan. Camp Flexible, the division redeployment hub, had the following:

- ▣ One hundred forty-one 20-man tents (all contracted) and several staging yards for wheeled and tracked vehicles headed south.
- ▣ A personnel processing center, run by the personnel service battalion.
- ▣ A customs inspection area and pallet-building area run by the military police and DISCOM's movement control cell (MCC).

- ▣ A mayor's cell for hotel management, run by the engineer brigade.

- ▣ A command and control (C2) cell in the tactical operations center (TOC), run by DISCOM.

All heavy equipment transporters (HETs) came to Camp Flexible to load before moving south, and the MCC in the TOC tracked all convoys with four in-transit visibility platforms and seven communications systems. Camp Flexible also processed and moved personnel leaving the theater from both BIAP and Balad air terminals. For the Balad flights, a ground convoy transported soldiers to Balad in 5-ton cargo trucks with security escorts, Cottonwood IED jammers, and aerial route reconnaissance before movements.

When TF 1AD remained in place, Camp Flexible transitioned immediately from redeployment to reception, staging, and onward movement operations. With a division priority in hand, the camp reversed the process and brought everything back to Iraq within 2 weeks. Although no passenger movements to Balad had encountered enemy activity during redeployment, two convoys were hit coming back. On 17 April, Camp Flexible operations ended, and the camp was turned over as a new BCT FOB.

Command Post Kuwait had been the division's redeployment hub in the south since early November 2003. From November to January 2004, DISCOM had provided C2 of the operation as well. The operation spanned four major redeployment assembly areas and wash racks. Early retrograde operations returned over 350 pieces of equipment to Fort Riley and various garrisons in Germany, and



1st Armored Division soldiers fix a radiator at Baghdad International Airport, 13 June 2004.

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In M1 and M2 fleets, some track averaged 100 miles per day in increased temperatures at increased speed. Premature bushing failures led to changing M2/M3 track shoes every 30 to 45 days. The M1s also suffered from engine failure and road attacks. The M2s suffered from engine, transmission, and suspension component failures. The M113s suffered from fan tower, cooling system, transmission, and suspension failures.

redeployment operations were in full swing when the order was given to remain in place.

Within 96 hours after notification, CP Kuwait, like CP Flexible, reversed its operations immediately from redeployment to deployment and began moving division equipment and personnel back into convoys headed north. Priorities for this move were critical because most of the MSB's fuelers and other critical logistics equipment were competing for movement at the same time combat equipment was. Several hundred containers with critical equipment, Standard Army Management Information System, and repair parts had to compete for space on the limited number of M872 trailers available.

Within 10 days, TF 1AD returned 45 percent of the combat power (M1, M2, M3, AH64, and OH58) that had moved to Kuwait, and within 3 weeks, all division equipment was back in operation in Iraq. Entire units that had cleared their year-long FOBs traveled the 435-mile route to Kuwait; washed and prepared their equipment for movement home; traveled the same route back; and began over with unexpected mental and physical agility. The process was much easier psychologically, of course, for those who had never made the trip to Kuwait because most soldiers believed this was a guaranteed ticket home.

With the turn-around accomplished, TF 1AD fought for 90 days more with weathered combat fleets while waiting for the parts pipeline to reopen. The high operational tempo, larger AO, and extended mission timeline soon caused higher, nonmission-capable rates than had existed during the previous 6 months of deployment.

Most M1 parts were available in theater, although M2 and M113 transmissions were in short supply because they came through wholesale and thus had longer wait times. All other parts were available in the system, although not as many in theater. When possible, they moved by air instead of by sea or ground means. The Tank Automotive Command and Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) logistics assistance representatives were extremely responsive to the division's needs and were critical to keeping combat systems in the fight. Within a month after the extension, the materiel section acquired enough track for the M1/M2 fleet.

Mission analysis showed that reaching some of the new 1AD FOBs would require 8 or more hours by ground convoy, so the DISCOM commander, Colonel John A. Christensen, shifted the division's focus from ground to air resupply. Aerial resupply, although new to a division that had enjoyed the compact Baghdad AO for a year, became a critical enabler for brigades operating in the new joint operations areas in MND(CS).

Every possible aircraft was used, including Air Force C130s and Sherpas and Army CH47s and UH60s. The 2ACR, which operated from An Najaf to Al Kut (120 miles), opened air bridges from Kuwait almost immediately, with routine deliveries of up to 40 air load pallets of ammunition and supplies twice weekly. C130s also left from BIAP to deliver supplies from the corps logistics nodes in the north to 2ACR. Sherpas, used on occasion, traveled a routine route as well, but were primarily used between Ali Al Saleem (Kuwait) and LSA Anaconda to deliver critical aviation repair parts. CH47s moved ammunition frequently for emergency ammunition

resupply during reset of brigade ammunition basic loads and then routinely, once CJTF-7 cut three aircraft in direct support of TF 1AD and positioned them at BIAP.

The Iron Eagle Express (IEX)—the modern version of the Red Ball Express that sped supplies to the Allies during World War II—was the largest DISCOM effort to maximize the use of air support for resupply. Through the combined efforts of the DISCOM and TF 1AD's 4th (Aviation) Brigade (4BDE), the IEX provided routine aerial resupply via UH60 of critical Class II, III (P), VIII, and IX supplies to all brigade FOBs and logistics nodes; movement of mail and passengers; and a method of expediting loads from Kuwait, normally a 3- to 5-day convoy by ground.

Within 2 weeks of the division's change of mission, the IEX began flying twice daily. Initial flights were individual sling-load missions to move Class IX supplies from Baghdad to Al Kut. Daily follow-on flights involved two UH60s flying north to Balad and Camp Cooke in the daytime and two UH60s flying south to the circuit of FOBs in MND(CS) at night. The IEX moved soldiers and replacements, chaplains, linguists, reporters, MND(CS) liaisons, the Polish Ambassador, and even human remains. Cargo included all classes of supply, medical equipment, laundry, and even mousetraps. By mid-May, the division's new CH47s, hauling Class V and IX supplies, augmented the IEX and provided a much-needed heavy-lift and long-haul capability ideally suited for the Balad and Kuwait runs.

Augmented by a liaison officer from 4BDE, DISCOM managed the IEX (both UH60 and CH47) with a 6-man team of schedulers and escorts. Within 30 days, the IEX had flown 150 tons of supplies and 800 passengers in over 60 missions. When IEX operations ended in June, 250 tons of supplies and 1,400 passengers had flown in over 100 missions.

Task Force 1AD could not have turned around without the help of the 13th Corps Support Command and the mature theater V Corps had created during its year in Iraq. Because much of the reconstitution planned for home-station locations occurred in Iraq, reachback to big Army support agencies was also critical. Despite having an additional division to support, CJTF-7 provided 24 HETs and 4 CH47s in direct support to the division. CJTF-7 logisticians ensured the quick release of ammunition, demolition, and parts from theater warehouses, Army Materiel

Command (AMC), wholesale, and U.S. Army Europe SSAs. The CFLCC provided 7 new VSATS and a team of technicians and contractors who worked around the clock to set them up. The 321st CTASC and U.S. Army, Europe (USAREUR), Logistics Assistance Division readjusted parameters and settings for SARSS.

USAREUR, the 200th Materiel Management Command, and the Logistics Support Agency processed and managed over 1,500 DODAAC actions in 72 hours over the Easter weekend. Task Force 1CD and DLA helped obtain hundreds of fuel filters for the division's tanker fleets. The AMC established an ad hoc team of 12 people with logistics assistance representatives and others from the Communications-Electronics Command, the Aviation and Missile Command, and the Theater Army Area Command with TF 1CD AMC teams providing interim support. The 226th Medical Logistics Battalion, CJTF-7 Surgeon's Office, and the 2d Medical Brigade provided division and echelons above division coverage until the TF 1AD Combat Health Support footprint was set. And, of most importance, the 593d Corps Support Group and subordinate units of the 515th and 185th Corps Support Battalions, 308th Quartermaster Company, and various units at Log Base Seitz (Baghdad) answered the division's every request for Class III (P), Class IV, laundry and bath, and bulk water production teams.

When the division neared steady-state operations again in mid-May, the division commander, Major General Martin E. Dempsey, said that TF 1AD could now use "heavy" and "agile" in the same sentence and that this was a great story for the Army. Certainly, TF 1AD proved it was agile: it had probably turned around as fast and furiously as any light division could. The task force overcame challenges presented by a new enemy, terrain, equipment, and mission during its Operation Iraqi Freedom extension, but the shift in the nature of logistics was the biggest challenge of all. The task force expanded ground LOCs from 450 to 25,000 square miles, built air LOCs and air bridges not needed or even thought of before, constructed FOBs from scratch while soldiers occupied them, reestablished recently depleted stockpiles of ammunition and supplies, and accomplished all of this in approximately 3 weeks while the division continued to fight without interruption. This was truly the work of Iron Soldiers providing Iron Support for America's Tank Division. **MR**

*Major Martha G. Granger, U.S. Army, is the Support Operations Officer for Task Force 1st Armored Division Support Command. She received a B.S. from the U.S. Military Academy, an M.A. from Duquesne University, and is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth. She has served in various command and staff positions in the continental United States, Europe, and Iraq.*